

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of preventing or reducing myocardial dysfunction comprising administering an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit lysozyme to a
5 cell or animal in need thereof.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the agent is a carbohydrate having at least two N-acetylglucosamine (NAG) units.
- 10 3. A method according to claim 1 wherein the agent is N,N' diacetylglucosamine (chitobiose) or N,N',N'' triacetylglucosamine (TAC).
4. A method according to claim 1 wherein the agent is an antisense oligonucleotide to lysozyme or antibody to lysozyme.
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5. A method according to claim 1 wherein the agent can inhibit the binding of lysozyme to a glycoprotein on the cell to be treated.
6. A method according to claim 1 where the animal has a condition
20 selected from the group consisting of sepsis and systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS).
7. A method of preventing or reducing an inflammatory response comprising administering an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit
25 lysozyme to a cell or animal in need thereof.
8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the agent is a carbohydrate having at least two N-acetylglucosamine (NAG) units.
- 30 9. A method according to claim 7 wherein the agent is N,N' diacetylglucosamine (chitobiose) or N,N',N'' triacetylglucosamine (TAC).

10. A method according to claim 7 wherein the agent is an antisense oligonucleotide to lysozyme or antibody to lysozyme.
11. A method according to claim 7 wherein the agent can inhibit the
5 binding of lysozyme to a glycoprotein on the cell to be treated.
12. A method according to claim 7 where the animal has a condition selected from the group consisting of sepsis and systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS).
- 10 13. A method of preventing or reducing the onset of myocardial dysfunction in an animal with sepsis comprising administering an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit lysozyme to the animal.
- 15 14. A method of reversing myocardial depression in an animal with sepsis comprising administering an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit lysozyme to the animal.
- 20 15. A method according to claim 14 wherein the agent is N,N'-diacetylglucosamine (chitobiose).
16. A method of treating a condition selected from the group consisting of septic shock and systemic inflammatory response syndrome (SIRS) comprising administering an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit
25 lysozyme to a cell or animal in need thereof.
17. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of an agent that can inhibit lysozyme and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.
- 30 18. A method of identifying substances which can bind to lysozyme comprising the steps of:

(a) reacting lysozyme and a test substance, under conditions which allow for formation of a complex between the lysozyme and the test substance, and

- (b) assaying for complexes of lysozyme and the test substance, for free
5 substance or for non complexed lysozyme, wherein the presence of complexes indicates that the test substance is capable of binding lysozyme.